

Some Basic Uniform Regulations

Listed are widely published regulations I think are important. From the nineteenth century until 1911 and 1912 the army announced changes to uniforms and insignia in general orders, when it changed to Uniform Regulations and Uniform Specifications. Modifications to these were issued in numbered changes to the two documents. Even so, the army continued to make some changes by publishing them in general orders, circulars, and bulletins. This mixture of using both changes to regulations and making interim changes to the regulations through circulars, general orders, and other documents has continued. It means researchers often have to consult two different sources for changes.

During World War II the army used circulars to announce interim changes until the adjutant general could publish them in army regulations. Since the 1960s the primary method of making interim changes has been through messages. In recent years the army has used a mixture of messages and separately published interim changes. Which type of document the army used varied over time, depending upon the whim of personnel in the War Department and later the Department of the Army, although the army did have official guidelines for each type of publication.

After World War I the army created many regulations that were to be used in parallel and by the end of World War II the system became very complex. For example, during the 1920s through the end of World War II, one important regulation was AR 600-35, *Prescribed Service Uniform*. This AR describes the articles of clothing, insignia, decorations, service medals, and badges and has illustrations of things like armbands, branch insignia, and aviation badges. Its companion was AR 600-40, *Wearing of Service Uniform*. This told soldiers how to wear the articles described in AR 600-35 and has illustrations showing where to wear armbands, branch insignia, and badges.

In the late 1940s the army had both Army Regulations and Special Regulations that must be considered together. By the 1990s the army was back to a single Army Regulation for uniforms and insignia although another regulation covered awards.

Until the start of WW II, uniform, insignia, and award regulations were few, although some of these regulations had several changes. An easy way to track down insignia evolution using post World War I regulations is to work backwards to identify all of the changes to a specific regulation. For example, the front page of AR 600-35, 31 March 1944, has at the bottom, what that edition replaced. It shows all of the changes since the 1941 edition in effect, the dates of the changes, and also the numbers of the circulars that implemented interim changes then in effect. If you go to the individual regulation changes, they also list the circulars that made interim changes prior to the issuance of the regulation change.

The army eliminated this important historic information about the time of the Vietnam War. The 12 February 1968 edition to AR 670-5 has in the front, "This regulation supersedes AR 670-5, 23 September 1966, and Change thereto; so much of DA message 816866, 29 May 1967, as pertains to AR 670-5; and DA message 819894, 19 June 1967." For years I have saved DA messages relating to uniforms, medals, and insignia, but today they are very hard to find and are already a major challenge for researchers.

Some post Vietnam War period regulations do offer some help by at least listing the subjects changed. The 30 January 1975 edition of AR 670-5 has, "This regulation supersedes AR 670-5, 8 January 1971; and DA messages DAPE-MPD: 302010Z Sep 71 (U), subject: Wear of Army Green Windbreaker; 0514067 Oct 71 (U), subject: Wearing of branch insignia by

Chaplains on utility cap; 112119Z Jan 72 (U), subject: Wear of field jacket with civilian clothes; 131951Z Mar 72 (U), subject: Field and work uniform; 021315Z May 72 (U), subject: Interim change to AR 670-5, uniform and insignia, male pers; 291946Z Sep 72 (U), subject: Interim changes to AR 670-5; 131225Z Oct 72 (U), subject: Green tabs for CSM; and DA message DAPE-HRP-P 180028Z Aug 73 (U), subject: Interim change to AR 670-5.”

The army also printed regulations with the then current changes incorporated and widely circulated these versions. The army printed AR 672-5-1 with changes 1 through 8 in 1964 and then again it printed the regulation with changes 1 through 18 on 8 April 1968, but that date is found only on those pages marked C 18.

As a final note, all of the early army regulations fit into one book. Now uniforms regulations occupy a single book thicker than Civil War regulations. AR 670-1, 1 July 2002, has 346 pages.

The basic uniform and insignia regulations I consider important for 19th and 20th century US Army follow. After this list is a short discussion of other resources:

1821: *General Regulations for the Army* (uniforms in Article 65).

1825: *General Regulations for the Army* (uniforms in Article 65).

1832: WD, AGO, GO 50, 11 June 1832.

1833 for cavalry uniform: HQA, AGO, Order 38, 2 May 1833.

1835: *General Regulations for the Army 1835* (Article LII is “Uniform, or Dress for the Army”).

1841: *General Regulations for the Army of the United States, 1841* (Article LXXXIII, “Uniform, and Dress of the Army”).

1847: *General Regulations for the Army of the United States, 1847* (Article LVII, “Uniform and Dress of the Army”).

1851: WD, AGO, GO 31, 12 June 1851. There is an unofficial illustrated but widely used version in *Regulations for the Uniform & Dress of the Army of the United States* published by William H. Horstmann and Sons.

1854: WD, AGO, GO 1, January 20, 1854 is a one page order that makes several changes including the introduction of a jacket for mounted troops.

1857: *Regulations for the Uniform and Dress of the United States* (Article 51, “Uniform and Dress of the Army”).

1861: *Regulations for the Army of the United States, 1861* (Article LI. “Uniform and Dress of the Army”).

1872: *Regulations for the Uniform and Dress of the Army of the United States, July 1872.* WD, AGO, GO 92, 26 Oct 1872.

1881: *Regulations of the Army of the United States and General Orders in Force on the 17th of February 1881* (Article LXXXVI).

1888: *Regulations for the Uniform of the Army of the United States.*

1897: *Regulations and Decisions Pertaining to the Uniforms of the Army of the United States.*

1898: *Regulations and Decisions Pertaining to the Uniforms of the Army of the United States,* 2d edition.

1899: *Regulations and Decisions Pertaining to the Uniforms of the Army of the United States,* 3d Edition.

1900: *Regulations and Decisions Pertaining to the Uniforms of the Army of the United States,* 4th Edition.

1901: *Regulations and Decisions Pertaining to the Uniforms of the Army of the United States,* 5th Edition.

1902: HQA, AGO GO 132, 31 Dec 1902. Complete uniform regulations.

1904: WD, GO 197, 31 Dec 1904. Complete uniform regulations.

1907: WD, GO 169, 14 Aug 1907. Complete uniform regulations.

1908: Illustrations for 1907 uniforms and insignia described in WD GO 169. Published by the Office of the Quartermaster General, dated October 1, 1908, and titled “Uniform of the Army of the United States.” This is a set of nearly 140 loose lithographed plates, although the highest number is 143, since a few were eliminated due to uniform changes that occurred after the start of printing.

1911: *Regulations for the Uniform of the United States Army,* 26 Dec 1911.

1912 *Specification for the Uniforms of the United States Army,* 25 Jan 1912.

1913: *Specification for the Uniforms of the United States Army,* February 15, 1913.

1914: *Regulations for the Uniform of the United States Army (Revised Edition),* July 22, 1914.

1917: *Special Regulations Number 41, Regulations for the Uniform of the United States Army,* August 15, 1917; *Special Regulations Number 42, Specifications for the Uniform of the United States,* August 15, 1917.

1921: Army Regulations (AR) 600-35, 14 Oct 1921, Prescribed Service Uniform; AR 600-40, Sept 1921, Wearing of Service Uniform.

1924: AR 600-35, 25 Nov 1924, Prescribed Service Uniform.

1926: AR 600-35, 31 Dec 1926, Prescribed Service Uniform; AR 600-40, 31 Dec 1926, Wearing of Service Uniform.

1931: AR 600-40, 22 June 1931, Wearing of Service Uniform.

1941: AR 600-35, 10 Nov 1941, Prescribed Service Uniform; AR 600-40, 28 Aug 1941, Wearing of Service Uniform.

1943: AR 600-37, 29 July 1943, Prescribed Service Uniform – Women Personnel of the Army.

1944: AR 600-40, 31 Mar 1944, Wearing of Service Uniform; AR 600-35, 31 March 1944, Prescribed Service Uniform.

1945: AR 600-37, 16 April 1945, Prescribed Service Uniform – Women Personnel of the Army.

1946: AR 600-70, 6 August 1946, Ground Badges.

1948: SR 600-38-1, 10 Dec 1948, Evening Dress Uniform; AR 600-70, 15 April 1948, Badges; AR 600-45, 22 Sep 1948, Service Medals.

1949: SR 600-37-1, 13 June 1949, Women's Army Uniform; SR 600-40-1, 22 June 1949, Uniforms (described male uniforms); AR 620-80-5, 20 July 1949, Uniform for Civilians in Overseas Commands.

1950: SR 600-38-1, 24 March 1950, Evening Dress Uniform; SR 600-45-1, 27 June 1950, Decorations (gives procedures for recommending awards); AR 600-45, 27 June 1950, Decorations (describes awards and how to wear).

1951: SR 600-37-2, 17 July 1951, Service Uniform for Women Personnel; AR 600-32, 11 April 1951, Uniform For Male Personnel (When to wear uniforms); SR 600-32-1, 11 April 1951, Articles and Types of Uniform for Male Personnel; AR 600-70, 24 September 1951, Badges; AR 600-60, 25 October 1951, Insignia (gives philosophy of insignia in 1 page); SR 600-60-1, 28 October 1951, Insignia;; AR 600-65, 12 December 1951, Service Medals.

1952: 5 September 1952, Blue Dress, Blue Mess, and Evening Dress Uniforms for Male Personnel; SR 600-32-11, 5 September 1952, White Dress and White Mess Uniforms for Male Personnel; SR 600-37-10, 16 September 1952, Evening Dress Uniform for Women Personnel; SR 600-32-1, 20 October 1952, Articles and Types of Uniform for Male Personnel.

1953: SR 600-60-1, 8 April 1953, Insignia.

1954: AR 672-15, 24 November 1954, Service Medals; AR 600-70, 29 March 1954; Badges.

1956: AR 672-5-1, 20 July 1956, Decorations; AR 672-5-2, 19 September 1956, Illustrations of Decorations; AR 670-5, 20 September 1956, Uniforms and Insignia, Male Personnel.

1957: AR 220-105, 8 August 1957 on Unit Awards.

1958: AR 672-5-1, 28 March 1958, Service Medals; AR 672-15-1, 29 March 1958.

1959: AR 670-5, 28 September 1959, Uniform and Insignia Male Personnel; AR 670-30, 20 October 1959, Uniform and Insignia Female Personnel.

1960: AR 670-32, 29 January 1960, Integration of Women's New Uniforms.

1961: AR 672-5-1, 3 May 1961, Awards; AR 672-5-2, 25 October 1961, Illustrations of Awards.

1962: AR 670-33, 23 July 1962, Integration of Women's Army Green Hat and Gold Hat Insignia.

1966: AR 670-30, 25 August 1966, Uniform and Insignia Female Personnel; AR 670-5, 23 September 1966, Uniform and Insignia Male Personnel.

1968: AR 670-5, 12 February 1968, Uniform and Insignia Male Personnel.

1969: AR 670-5, 1 May 1969, Uniform and Insignia Male Personnel; AR 670-30, 13 May 1969, Uniform and Insignia Female Personnel.

1971: AR 670-5, 8 January 1971, Uniform and Insignia Male Personnel.

1974: AR 672-5-1, 2 June 1974, Military Awards.

1975: AR 670-5, 30 January 1975, Uniform and Insignia Male Personnel; AR 670-30, Uniform and Insignia Female Personnel.

1979: AR 670-1, 15 February 1979, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia. This is the first AR to place information on men's and women's uniforms in one document.

1981: AR 670-1, 1 November 1981, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia.

1984: AR 672-5-1, 12 April 1984, Military Awards.

1985: AR 670-1, 16 January 1986, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia.

1987: AR 670-1, 20 May 1987, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia.

1988: The army began to issue booklets printed on newspaper type stock and put a variety of regulations in each book. These books were called All Ranks Personnel Updates and gave them a number. All Ranks Personnel Update 13, 16 March 1988, contained AR 672-5-1, Military Awards, with lines through changed words and revised words inserted. The date inside Update 13, which is on AR 672-5-1, is 12 April 1984, but the changes shown are as of 16 March 1988.

1989: AR 672-5-1, 18 September 1989, Military Awards, contained in Update 14.

1990: AR 672-5-1, 1 November 1990, Military Awards, contained in Update 15.

1992: AR 670-1, 1 September 1992, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia.

1995: AR 600-8-22, 22 March 1995, Military Awards.

2002: AR 670-1, 1 July 2002, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia.

Some Other Research Sources

The army issued AR 30-3000, *Price List of Clothing and Equipage*, each year between the world wars, usually during the June through August period. It included a list of insignia and uniform pieces for sale. Often there was only one change/year. During World War II Supply Catalog QM 5-1-C (which was also issued annually) replaced AR 30-3000.

The National Guard also had regulations, NGRs, between the world wars and later NGB Regs that still later reverted back to NGRs. NGR 672-1, October 1996, *Trophies and Awards Program* and NGR 672-3, Feb 78, *National Guard Chief's 50 Marksmanship Badge* are still in force.

The army published the *Army Register* each year. It lists all officers and dates of rank and other information. Those *Army Registers* prior to WW I list each officer by branch and within the branch, by seniority. Registers prior to World War I have the assignments by regiment also. By the mid 1920s registers listed officers by seniority and branch but some of the previous assignment were not included. In the mid 1920s the register became an alphabetic listing of officers with dates of rank and branch assignment. Those after WW II have less information and are less helpful. Army Registers between the World Wars include official histories of regiments. The *National Guard Register* for each year is similar for NG officers and units.

Each year the Secretary of War published an *Annual Report*. The exact titles varied over time. Annual Reports contain reports of the Commanding General, the Quartermaster General, the Adjutant General, the Chief of Ordnance, and the like. The subordinate reports such as the Annual Report of the Quartermaster General were published both as a separate report and as part of the Secretary of War's Annual Report. In addition these reports are part of the annual "Congressional Serial" set that some large libraries have.